

LONGEVITY IN *THECLA BETULAE* L.—On 11th September 1973 I made an excursion to the borders of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire to obtain a female *Thecla betulae* for egg laying. One was soon captured and although very worn its abdomen was distended. The butterfly served me exceedingly well by laying well over seventy ova. But more surprising to me was the length of time this insect lived. Housed in a portable cage in the walled garden and fed on a diluted solution of honey and sugar it was content to crawl and rest on the branches of its foodplant and bask in the late autumn sunshine. It finally expired on 5th November having survived for 55 days from the date of its capture, and during this period there was a number of ground frosts. This leads me to wonder whether *betulae* lives as long in the wild, and if so whether the butterfly has a longer life span than is generally realised. — DAVID BROWN, 25 Charlecote, near Warwick, Warwickshire.

Current Literature

British Tortricoid Moths. Cochyliidae and Tortricidae: Tortricinae by J. D. Bradley, W. G. Tremewan and Arthur Smith with colour plates by Brian Hargreaves. The Ray Society, 1973.

In almost 70 years since Barrett's important treatise there has been little to rival this exceptionally fine addition to our works on British micro-lepidoptera. This group receives scant attention by the majority of our entomologists, chiefly due to the paucity of readily available, illustrated and up-to-date literature. This volume, the first of two which are planned by the Ray Society to cover the British Tortricidae goes some way to fulfilling this need. All the known British species of Cochyliidae and Tortricinae are described and illustrated in colour; with many species the feeding habits are also portrayed.

Far from being solely a reference book on this group of moths, it is in its own right a passably comprehensive text book, covering many aspects of the study of lepidoptera. In the introduction, the authors break down the superfamily Tortricoidea into its component sub-families, discussing some of the classification problems of the respective genera. The general wing patterns and their variation are also discussed. Considerable attention is then devoted to various physical characteristics of this group; adult wing venation and head features, larval and pupal structures all being lucidly illustrated with deliberate care to clarify the points made in the text. Notes are included on collecting, killing and setting the various stages, and methods of preparing adult specimens for examination of wing venation or genitalia structure are described. All the means for a positive identification of a dubious specimen are therefore brought together within the same binding. The introduction is brought to an end with a discussion on the phylogeny of the families, sub-families and tribes of the